

VZCZCXRO4576  
PP RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB  
DE RUEHFR #0108/01 0101556  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 101556Z JAN 07  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4128  
INFO RUEHZN/EST COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 1199  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1077  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAEPA/EPA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHC/DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 000108

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR G, OES, OES/E, OES/GC, STAS, EUR, EUR/WE  
DEPT INTERIOR FOR INTERNATIONAL  
WHITE HOUSE FOR CEQ  
EPA FOR AYRES/MEDEARIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: DOWNSIDES TO CHIRAC'S FEBRUARY 2-3 ENVIRONMENT  
CONFERENCE - REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE (SBU)

REF: 06 STATE 116862

¶1. (SBU) Summary and Action Request: The French Embassy in Washington recently invited Interior Secretary Kempthorne and EPA Administrator Johnson to attend the Conference for Global Ecological Governance to be held in Paris in early February. Given the characterization of agenda issues and the strict format for discussion, Embassy is concerned this conference may not provide a suitable venue for the presentation of U.S. positions. Under these circumstances, Embassy questions whether senior U.S. officials should attend this conference and even whether the presence of a possible expert delegation would make sense. Department's early consideration appreciated. End Summary and Action Request.

-----  
From UNEP to UNEO?  
-----

¶2. (U) In September at UNGA, President Chirac told members that "uncontrolled human activity is bringing about a sort of slow collective suicide," and he urged the creation of a United Nations Environment Organization (UNEO) to replace the UN Environment Program (UNEP). Doing so he believes would upgrade consideration given to environmental issues within the United Nations system. Such a proposal is hardly new and France and a number of other European countries, as well as developing nations, have convened meetings to consider how to move similar proposals forward. (In light of differing U.S. views, the USG generally has not been invited to those meetings.) At UNGA, Chirac also announced that France would host an international conference to discuss the creation of a UNEO. That conference will be held in Paris on February 2-3, immediately following a meeting of the UNFCCC's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Paris, and immediately preceding a meeting of the Governing Council of the UNEP in Nairobi.

-----  
Green politics and other things  
-----

¶3. (U) In France's current election season, the environment issue is receiving top billing. In this context, Chirac announced an impressive 'Committee of Honor' (all French nationals) to oversee the February Conference for Global Ecological Governance. He called on, for example, former

Prime Minister - and now Bordeaux Mayor - Alain Juppe to coordinate the committee's activities. Juppe has expounded in a popular blog on the need for greater effort to tackle climate and environmental concerns. Another member of the seven person committee is Nicolas Hulot, a French environmental activist and himself a possible 'Green' presidential contender. Other members are from the scientific community, government, and industry.

-----  
Who's coming  
-----

¶4. (U) Conference materials note that its aim is to bring together senior government officials, scientists, industry leaders, NGOs, and public figures from 60 countries. GOF sources claim that France has invited about 20 individuals from the U.S., in addition to Kempthorne and Johnson. Names we've heard include former Vice President Gore and Governor Swartzenegger, but we are not certain whether they have accepted. The GOF seeks a total of about 150 participants from 50-60 countries. All invitees are personal guests of the president and the GOF will defray travel and hotels costs.

-----  
Straightjacket agenda, venue, & format  
-----

¶5. (SBU) The manner in which the conference is organized causes us concern that U.S. officials would have difficulty conveying U.S. positions. The conclusion of the conference appears foregone: the three-hour workshop at which the UNEO is to be discussed has as a goal: "...call(ing) for a

PARIS 00000108 002 OF 003

strengthening of international environmental governance by transforming the UNEP into a fully-fledged United Nations agency (UNEO)." Moreover, the morning following the workshop sessions, Chirac will close the conference with a "call for action." Opening and closing ceremonies will take place at the President's Elysee Palace and will consist of set speeches. Finally, the program for the concurrent, three-hour workshops contain not only the UNEO topic, but also other issues of interest to the U.S. and which we believe would require considerably different treatment than that they would receive at this conference. The program can be found at the conference website: [www.citoyensdelaterre.fr](http://www.citoyensdelaterre.fr) and follows in para 6.

¶6. (U) Program for the Conference on Ecological Governance.

February 2  
-----

1100 hrs: Elysee Palace. Official Opening. Speech by President Chirac.

1115 hrs: Remarks by various political and scientific figures.

1200 hrs: Reception at the Elysee Palace.

1300 hrs: Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Luncheon co-hosted by Foreign Minister Douste-Blazy and Ecology and Sustainable Development Minister Olin.

1530 hrs: Kleber International Conference Center. Delegates divide on six themes.

- Workshop 1: Combating climate disruption:

This workshop will analyze, on the basis of the latest conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel on climate Change, the impact, cost and consequences of international inaction on climate change. It will put forward ambitious measures, especially in the areas of energy and transport.

- Workshop 2: Acting together to safeguard biodiversity:

This workshop will evaluate the threats facing biodiversity and assess the impact of its deterioration on human societies. It will propose a new mode of governance to safeguard biodiversity. The workshop will highlight the need for an international expert evaluation of the situation with regard to biodiversity and will address new topics now emerging such as high-sea biodiversity.

- Workshop 3: Combating pollution and protecting health:

This workshop will analyze the effects, both global and local, of air pollution, particularly with regard to public health, and will take stock of the controls on transfers of hazardous substances and waste. The workshop will look at strengthening of the "polluter pays" principle.

- Workshop 4: Making water a collective issue:

The focus of this workshop will be on sanitation issues, especially in the developing world, and the actions to be planned to adapt the management of this resource to cope with climate change, in conjunction with the Millennium Development Goals.

- Workshop 5: Changing mentalities and patterns of production and consumption:

This workshop will address the human dimension of the ecological crisis and the way in which we should face up to the contemporary challenges raised by the population explosion, uncontrolled urbanization and mass poverty. It will recommend changes in individual behavior and in patterns of production and consumption.

- Workshop 6: Strengthening international environmental governance

PARIS 00000108 003 OF 003

This workshop will conduct a critical overview of the current approach to international cooperation, which is characterized by the fragmentation and weakness of the United Nations system. It will call for a strengthening of international environmental governance by transforming the United Nations Environment Program into a fully-fledged United Nations agency (UNEO).

February 3  
-----

0930 hrs: Elysee Palace. Chairpersons will give a presentation of the proceedings of their respective six workshops.

1100 hrs: President Chirac will officially close the proceedings and send out a "Paris call for action."

17. (SBU) Comment: While we would normally encourage the presence of senior officials to articulate U.S. positions at high-level international environmental gatherings, President Chirac's decidedly 'French' agenda for the February Ecological Governance event appears to include difficult international environmental issues for which acceptable international solutions have not yet been identified. Moreover, neither are the proposals called for in the conference necessarily the ones advocated by the U.S., nor does the conference format lend itself to a full airing of the topics. Accordingly, we seek the Department's guidance whether and how the USG should be represented at the conference. End comment.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

STAPLETON